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***** Press Release *****

Jersey City Expands Recreational Opportunities to Improve Youth Activities and Professional Development while Adhering to Safety Restrictions

JERSEY CITY - **Mayor Steven M. Fulop** announced today the new Department of Recreation and Youth Development is offering small group in-person activities and virtual events while adhering to the New Jersey Department of Health “Guidance for Sports Activities”. In an effort to improvise traditional recreational programming, the city has been providing “pop-up” activities for small groups in 8 parks throughout the city while also moving professional development programming to online.

“Most of Recreation’s summer activities are physical sports or in-person experiences, which have obviously been prohibited for social distancing and safety purposes. Since those restrictions have slowly lifted, we’ve worked to identify more unconventional ways to provide similar stimulation for our youth, for both physical and educational activities,” said **Mayor Fulop**.

Despite the COVID health and safety limitations, Recreation has worked to introduce new pop-up events limited to 20 participants per group at the following parks: Berry Lane Park, Mary Benson Park, Enos Jones Park, Hamilton Park, Ercel Webb Park, Pershing Field, Audubon Park, and Leonard Gordon Park. Staff from the Division of Recreation is on-site at each of the 8 parks during designated times to offer assistance with individual skills, which includes a range of programming from “Skills and Drills” in Basketball, Baseball, Tennis, and Soccer to “Dancercise” and “Fitness Strength & Conditioning”. Participants must provide their own equipment and adhere to all city social distancing rules.

“The Summer months are traditionally our busiest time of year. So, while we’re unable to conduct the events and activities we’d normally be doing in August, we’ve worked to construct a curriculum that maintains everyone’s safety while also providing Jersey City’s youth with the recreational outlet and scholastic programming they often rely on,” said **Lucinda McLaughlin, Director of the Department of Recreation & Youth Development**.

The Department of Recreation & Youth Development is also working through the current restrictions to offer FREE professional development through September 6th for high school students ages 15 to 24 years old. Normally, the city’s professional development days are held in-person at the sites of our internship hosts, but the city has started using online portals in order to comply with the safety protocols in place and still offer these college and career readiness programs.

Professional development includes conversations and group activities focused on:

- Career and Scholastic Interests
- Elevator Pitches & Public Speaking
- Building your Life Map
- College Readiness
- Resume/Mock-Interviewing w/Professionals

Professional Development is being conducted via Zoom. Applicants can register [here](#).

Earlier this summer, the city reopened two public pools overseen by Recreation, as well as all city playgrounds and splash pads. Safety precautions are in place with pool access for residents only and a maximum of 50-percent capacity to allow for social distancing. Pool goers are required to follow safety guidelines per the NJ Department of Health.

All media inquiries should be directed to Kimberly Scalcione at kscalcione@jcnj.org.